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What will the national security law mean for travelers -- and Hong Kong's tourism recovery?

Kate Springer, CNN • Published 8th July 2020



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Hong Kong (CNN) — When it comes to desirable post-pandemic travel destinations, Hong Kong would be an obvious choice thanks to its capable handling of Covid-19

outbreaks, which has so far limited infections to just 1,300 cases in the city of 7.5 million.

But now, some travelers may be worried about visiting for a totally different reason.

On June 30, the Chinese government introduced a national security law in Hong Kong that outlaws "acts of secession, subversion of state power, terrorist activities and collusion with foreign or external forces to endanger national security."

Hong Kong authorities insist the law will "only target an extremely small minority of people," yet its broad language and global scope raise questions about what it means for foreign travelers -- and the city's tourism recovery -- once Covid-19 travel restrictions ease.

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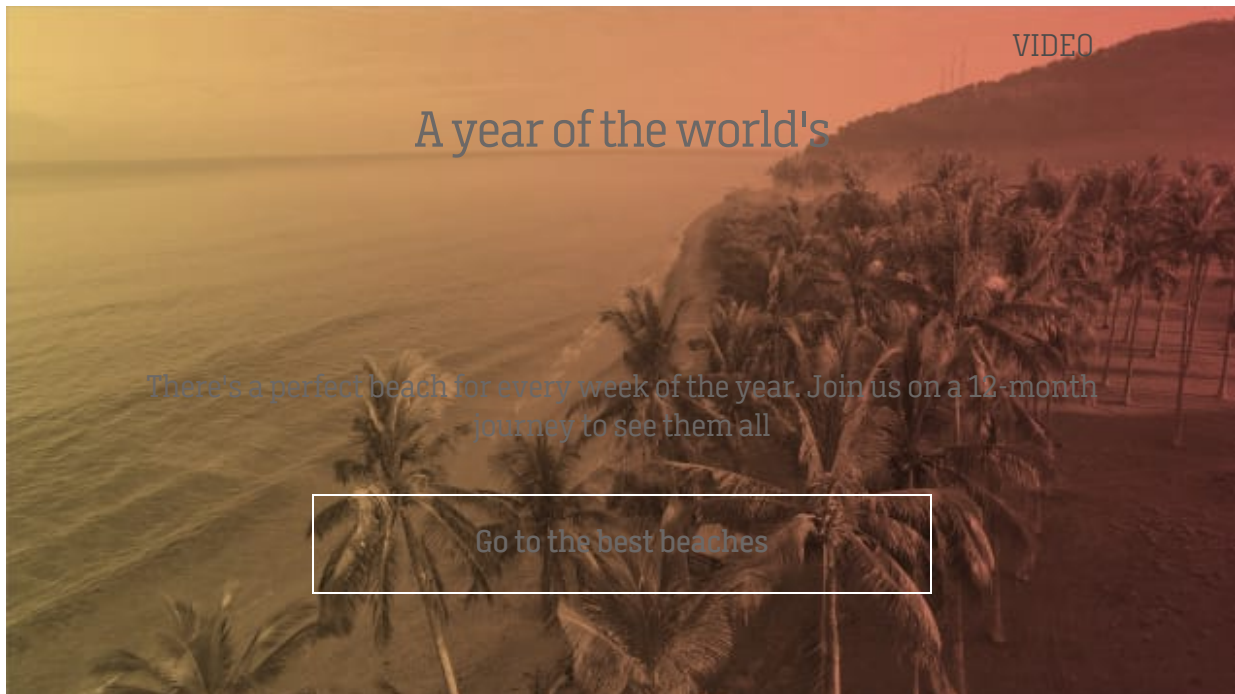
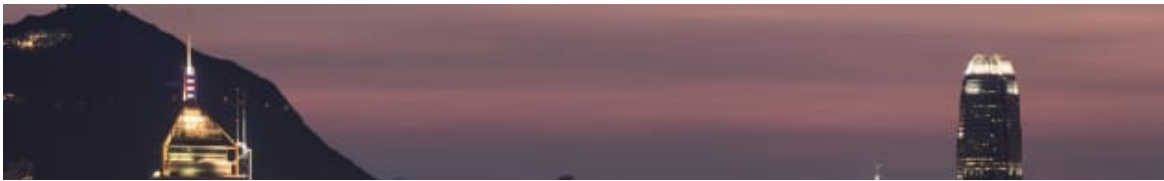
The new law's Article 34 states that foreigners in Hong Kong could be "subject to deportation" if they contravene the law, even if they are not prosecuted. Meanwhile, Article 38 asserts that the law applies to offenses committed "outside the region" by foreigners who are not residents of Hong Kong or China.

This language has spurred discussions in countries such as the United States, Canada, Australia and the UK, prompting them to revise their respective travel advisories, warning citizens of increased risks and "surveillance," "detention" and "deportation" under the new law, which details a maximum penalty of life imprisonment.

"Combined with Covid-19 and the protests, the national security law has created lots of uncertainty about the upcoming recovery," Herbert Yum, a Hong Kong research manager at market research provider Euromonitor International, tells CNN Travel.

"We can expect that visitors from the US and UK will decrease significantly (after Covid-19 restrictions relax) because both governments have expressed lots of concern about the safety and stability of Hong Kong. However, tourists from mainland China, which make up approximately 70% of Hong Kong's total (overnight) tourism arrivals, could feel safer and more willing to come to Hong Kong."

Will the law impact travelers?



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